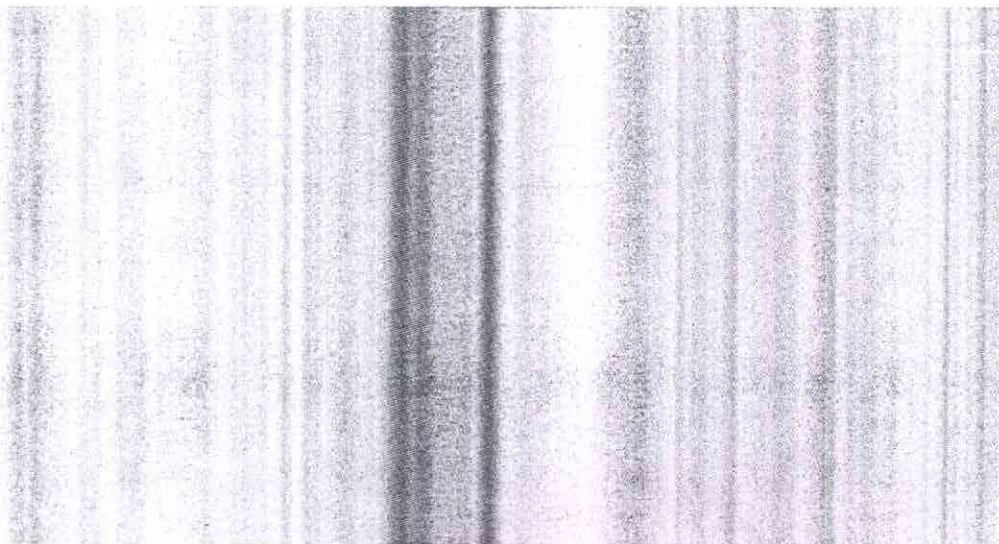
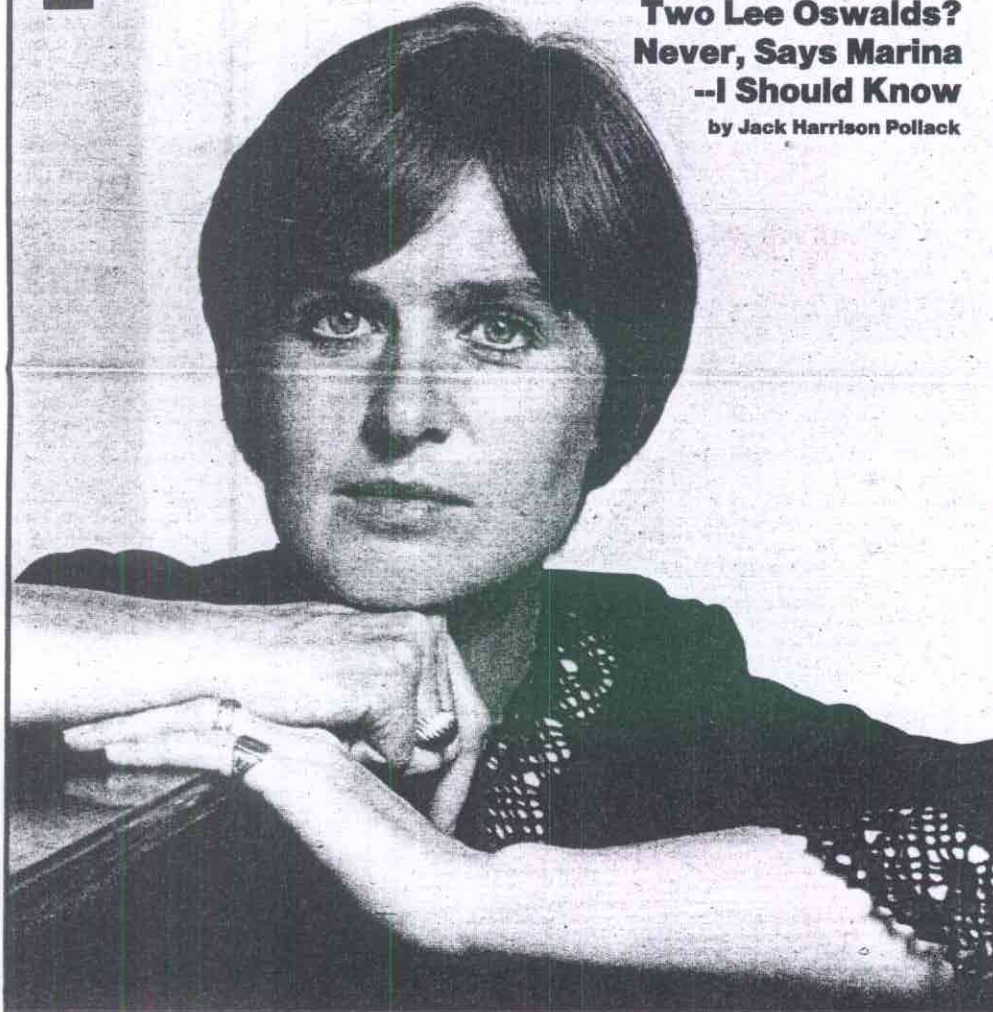


The Washington Post

# parade

**Two Lee Oswalds?  
Never, Says Marina  
--I Should Know**

by Jack Harrison Pollack



# Two Oswalds? --Not So, Says Lee's Wife

*She denies Soviet agent posed  
as her husband to kill JFK:  
'I knew who I was sleeping with'*



Marina Oswald Porter



Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas police headquarters on Nov. 22, 1963—the day President Kennedy was shot to death in motorcade.

by Jack Harrison Pollack

**M**edical and legal agencies in Fort Worth, Tex., have been urged to dig up the body of the assassin who murdered President John F. Kennedy 16 years ago.

Why?

"To 'prove,' through a new autopsy, that he was not Lee Harvey Oswald but a look-alike Soviet KGB agent named Alek James Hidell who was assigned by Premier Nikita Khrushchev to kill JFK for opposing Russian aggression in Cuba and Berlin. The 'real' Oswald, according to this theory, is still alive in the Soviet Union.

This "Two Oswalds" campaign to reopen the assassin's coffin is being pressed by Michael Eddowes, a publicity-seeking 76-year-old British lawyer-author—now joined, officially, by the Dallas County medical examiner. It is argued that the Oswald described in U.S. Marine records of 1956-59 was two inches taller than the buried "Oswald" and had a scar behind his left ear that was not reported in the original 1963 autopsy.

But before the body can be exhumed, a court order is needed to protect Tarrant County from possible Oswald family civil suits. A Texas district court judge rejected the request for such an order—which is now being appealed. Meanwhile, would-be body snatchers reportedly have tampered with the grave, leaving

spade marks in the dug-up earth around the headstone.

Could a trained Soviet agent possibly have been sent to the U.S. in June 1962, posed as Oswald and then killed President Kennedy in November 1963 before being gunned down himself by Jack Ruby two days later? Could such a clever actor for 17 months have fooled Oswald's irrepressibly loquacious mother Marguerite, his sensible Oklahoma businessman brother Robert and shrewd Russian-born wife Marina—none of whom questioned the assassin's identity before the burial?

PARADE put this question to Marina Prusakova Oswald Porter, the assassin's 38-year-old widow, remarried and currently living a new life with her new family in their three-bedroom ranch home on 17 acres east of Dallas. "That's crazy!" she exclaimed in fluent English, though she often drops the articles, as do many Russians when speaking the language. "Don't you think I would know who my own husband was—who I was sleeping with!"

To prove that she did, the tiny (5-foot-1, 103-pound) Marina, who once seemed frumpy and bewildered but now resembles an assured post-liberation American woman, frankly volunteered: "I sometimes teased Lee—very unfairly—for not being real man. But he became a lot better lover and I later really began to enjoy sex with him. So if there was a different Lee Oswald from the one I married in Minsk in 1961, these intimate things would show him to be a fake."

So would many other little-known incidents told me by Oswald's widow, who still inspires mixed feelings of curiosity, contempt and compassion. Could any Russian agent have behaved as did her husband at assassination time—which she calls simply "November"?

On Friday evening, Nov. 22, after Oswald had been arrested for the murders of the President and Officer J.D. Tippitt, Marina looked into her grandmother's antique blue-green cup on her dresser, which the police had not noticed. Inside lay her husband's wedding ring. He had never removed it before but had left it there on that fateful morning—probably never expecting to wear it again.

"The next day," recalls Marina, "I spoke to Lee in Dallas jail through glass partition. This was last time I saw him alive. I saw guilt in his eyes even though he tried to hide it with bravado. Is that the right word? I never

looked it up in the dictionary.

"Like any wife, I would be first to want to believe that Lee was innocent, if only for my children's sake," she continued while chain-smoking menthol cigarettes. "But Lee definitely killed President Kennedy, I am sure."

"I'm sure Lee acted alone, too. If there was any conspiracy, it was different from what he did. Maybe some other crazy kooks wanted to kill John Kennedy that day, too. If there was anything to conspiracy, it would have come out by now. The Watergate cover-up didn't even last six months. How could they hide this 16 years with so many people working on it?"

"Lee was too much of a loner to make conspiracy with anybody about anything. He kept everything to himself. He couldn't obey orders. Lee was too mixed-up himself to be spy. No government would have trusted him with anything important. He was too—how do you say it?—unstable. He didn't even know what country he wanted to live in. Right after we were married, he complained about bad weather in Minsk, his dirty factory job, and Russian politicians."

"No, I don't think he ever met Jack Ruby, either. Lee never went to nightclubs or bars. He didn't fool around with girls. He didn't drink except Coke and Dr. Pepper."

On Monday morning, Nov. 25, Marina remembers avidly watching President Kennedy's funeral procession on TV in the Texas motel room where the Secret Service had hidden her. She remained glued to the screen until leaving for her husband's funeral that afternoon in the only nearby cemetery that would accept him: the Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth.

Three ministers refused to conduct services. The Dallas Lutheran clergyman who had promised to do so never appeared. A Fort Worth minister who came as a spectator agreed to offer a prayer at a quick graveside service, though his Bible was in his parked car two blocks away. Several newsmen volunteered as needed pallbearers. Before the pine box coffin was lowered into the dug-up trench, it was opened for a final farewell.

A silent, dry-eyed Marina picked up a handful of dirt. She leaned over but did not kiss her husband as she slipped her wedding ring on his finger. Surely then Marina Oswald knew that this was her husband and certainly not a hired Soviet agent.

"Neither our two children or I have

## "He didn't even know what country he wanted to live in"

visited Lee's grave since then," she confides. "But I went to President Kennedy's grave in 1963. It was so crowded that nobody even noticed me."

Oswald's widow has never read Eddowes's book or any of the other conspiracy-slanted assassination volumes. "Most are a bunch of lies," she says. Her favorite book is *Marina and Lee* by her friend Priscilla Johnson McMillan, who interviewed her husband in Moscow in 1959 when he defected from the U.S.

Still, Oswald's widow does not know for certain what impelled her "sick-in-the-head" (as she called him) husband to kill JFK, whom he actually admired. "Lee even once said—crazy, of course—that he wanted to be President himself when he was 43 or have a son that would be," she recalls.

Then she added with philosophic

detachment: "He always wanted to get attention for himself... wanted to be important.... maybe by killing somebody important. He wanted to kill General Walker and then Nixon. He was a—what do you say?—loser."

Oswald's behavior in the U.S. toward his wife—who prior to his notoriety spoke no English—was that of a stingy, tyrannical husband and not a free-spending, controlled government agent. It swung from savagery to tenderness.

"He would get mad at me when I didn't wash his shirt in five minutes," she recalls. "On my first Christmas in America in 1962, I begged Lee to buy me Christmas tree. But he said no, it was too expensive. When he got angry with me, he slapped me across face and beat me with his fists—like when I called him weak and coward."

But later he beg me to forgive him. Once he even bought me jar of caviar next day. Lee never could have married American girl. He wanted somebody he could control. If that awful thing hadn't happened in November, we probably would have broken up. I envy happy marriage of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter."

Today Marina leads a far calmer life with her second husband, Kenneth Jess Porter, a publicity-hating mechanic and carpenter, and their three children: June Lee, 17, Rachel, 16, her daughters by Oswald; and Mark, 13, her son by Porter. They were married in June 1965, divorced in 1974 after a quarrel but quickly reconciled in a happy common-law marriage. "I have much more mature relations with Ken than Lee," reveals Marina. "He is good husband and father, and I am content housewife and mother."

But their marital boat is invariably rocked whenever the JFK case again makes headlines.

Recently, when Michael Eddowes flew to Texas re-urging that the assassin's grave be opened, a Tarrant County legal adviser quipped, "That would be like you or me going to England and wanting to dig up Cromwell." A three-judge Fort Worth Court of Civil Appeals has delayed a hearing on the petition until this spring because of a crowded docket.

For an imposter to have been buried in Oswald's grave would mean a conspiracy involving perhaps thousands of corrupt persons.

In 1964 the Warren Commission members dismissed the "Two Oswalds" theory as nonsense. Its chairman, the late Chief Justice Earl Warren, predicted that a conspiracy industry would continue to thrive, pouring forth a seemingly endless river of unsubstantiated allegations and inferences more concerned with commerce than truth—or good taste.

Similarly, the 1976-79 House Assassinations Committee thoroughly investigated but rejected the "Two Oswalds" fiction.

Marina Oswald has never questioned the identity of the enigmatic American she married in her native land. She is not going to begin now. **P**

*Jack Harrison Pollack, who has studied the Oswald case for 16 years, is the author of the recently published "Earl Warren: The Judge Who Changed America."*



Marina and Lee after their marriage in the Soviet Union in 1961.